



A Guide to Teaching

How to research a prospective employer for employment



south carolina
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Researching an employer

OBJECTIVE: Patrons will have an understanding of how to research an employer to gather information about company descriptions, job duties and company employment requirements.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

- Copies of *How to research an employer* (2-3 copies for each participants)
- Computer area for participants to conduct online research of employers or have journals and company information that you will use to guide the class in learning how to properly conduct the activity.
- *Considerations*
 - *Consider using 2-3 employers that everyone is familiar with.*
 - *To save on paper, run worksheets double sided.*
 - *If using print materials only, consider having everyone examine the same employer upon starting, and once comfortable allow diversity into other areas separately.*

TIME REQUIRED:

2 hours

LESSON PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the class to the concept of how to research an employer for information on company description, culture, job requirements, performance, products and services.
2. Provide the class with the sheet “*How to research an employer.*” Guide the class in starting the process of researching an employer through a variety of methods. Provide insight to participants when researching a company, the following is possible:
 - a. You can write a customized resume and cover letter based on your findings about job requirements that the company or organization is looking for.
 - b. You understand that the current job opening may or may not be a good choice to consider.
 - c. You may learn important information about a company such as: expansions, work stoppages, new products, or closings.
 - d. The information gathered is important when and if any future interviews for a position becomes available. The newly learned information can help with interview questions that could be asked by the employer, or for you to ask them to provide insight into things that interest you about their services or products.

3. Assist the class with brainstorming companies that they would like to consider. It is best to do this as group so that others in the room who may be unfamiliar with this process may gain a new understanding of what things to consider.
4. If participants have trouble getting started, try offering the following information:
 - a. Most companies have a web site where you can find information such as annual reports and mission statements.
 - b. If the organization has a web site, you should be able to find it by using a search engine like Google. You can also call the company and ask for their web site address. It is often listed in business journals, the yellow pages and on company brochures.
 - c. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can use a computer at a public library and a One Stop Career System resource center or college career center.
 - d. You can also learn about the organization by asking questions of people who already work there.
 - e. Remember that your network of contacts may also be able to provide you with names of people within the organization who could talk with you.

In ending the workshop or class:

- Answer any outstanding questions that participants may have
- Provide information about library services and assistance on locating print materials in your library
- Provide encouragement to participants on creating a list of companies that they will explore for the future

RESEARCHING AN EMPLOYERS CHECKLIST

Information about the employer	
Name of employer (the actual name, not what you think it sounds like)	
Website address: main	
Is the company/organization local, statewide, national or international:	
Outline of main business	What products does it make? What services does it provide? What is the organization's mission statement? How would I sum this up in my own words?
Clients and customers	Who uses this organization's products/services?
Do they have competition?	What other organizations operate in this area or offer similar products/services? How do these organizations compare in your opinion?
Size	
Do they make news? (<i>try Google news and do a search</i>)	Look at recent press releases and review a quality daily newspaper or its website – what are the important stories and headlines for this organization?
Job Requirements and Applications	
Job opportunities/ or Titles	
Work experience	
Do you need a degree or certification or special background? (List them)	
Minimum requirements needed for the position	
Application deadline	
Contact details for applications or questions	
I need to demonstrate: communication skills, writing skills, teamwork, commercial awareness...	

Any specific job-related skills or experience needed?	
Type of application: paper, online application, resume...	
Selection processes: tests, interviews, assessment centre...	What is the process? If this information isn't available on the website, how can I find out more?
Corporate Culture	
How do I think this employer likes to see itself?	What are its stated or implied core values?
What does the employer's brand say to me?	How does the organization brand itself? What do I think about this?
Awards	Has this organization won any awards related to recruitment and workplace or its products and services?
Will I be based in one location or expected to travel to different offices and sites?	
Do they offer special training or another way to obtain employment with them?	
Does the company use methods to hire employees versus direct hire? (Staffing companies, One Stop training programs, etc.)	
What are the opportunities for progression and career development?	
What benefits are on offer – holidays, pension, private healthcare...?	
What is my general feeling about this organization?	
Why I would like to work for this employer	
Why I would not want to work for this company after doing some research?	

Companies that I am interested in learning about

1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	6.

Websites to consider

<http://scdiscus.org/business-a-legal>

South Carolina Virtual Library, use the smart search to examine the Business, Economics, and Legal areas.

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg>-The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides in depth information about American industries and their outlook

www.bizweb.com Online guide to 30,500+ companies

www.companiesonline.com

Search for companies online by name, city, state, ticker symbol, or industry.

www.business.com

A yahoo site providing company information, you may also search yahoo/business & economy/directories

<http://www.hoovers.com> This site allows you to search companies by industry

<http://www.advisorinsight.com>

Standard and Poor's site for information about stocks traded on its exchanges

<http://www.chamberofcommerce.com>

www.Guidestar.org

Provides a searchable directory of nonprofit organizations